American Women Missionaries and Pioneers Collection

Part 1: Missionaries

The Irene Forsythe Hanson Papers, 1921-1980

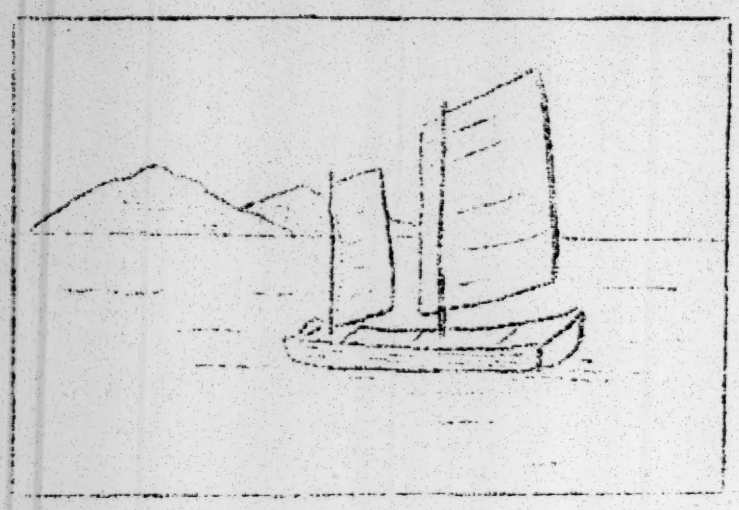
Series I

Correspondence
(Incoming and outgoing intermixed)

Folder Description:

Form letters describing Hanson's missionary work and life experience in China,
1930–December 1932

Box Number:	***Folder Number:***
3	32



"THE LORD ON HIGH
IS MIGHTIER THAN THE
MIGHTY WAVES OF THE SEA."

2 Tsi Yang Road,
Tsingtao, Shantung,
China.

SUMMER 1930.

"The best laid plans of mice and men gang aft agly". So did my plans for a full month's rest at Pu Tai Ho. Unexpected events made my stay in Tsingtao desirable. It has been vacation and a change, however, just to see foreigners, to live in my home, and to fit into a normal life for a time. Besides this two weeks spent out by the sea with glorious horseback rides, picnics, swimming and tennis have made it more enjoyable and have been just what I needed.

I want to tell of the unexpected part of my vacation. The last of July my cook returned from his home with an irresistable call. His village of over six hundred families had never had a witness to the gospel story; no one had ever gone to tell them of the Saviour; except for those to whom the cook had talked on his short trips home, the village had not even heard the name of 'Jesus'. He told us of numbers who had asked why the 'teachers' would not come to them, of the welcome assured by the headman of the village, of the offer of a number of wealthy people of rooms for our accommodation, and of the willingness of many to hear if we would only go. Our hearts were stirred and we felt we must answer the call. Since this village is out of our assigned field and our next year's itinerary was already full, we knew unless we went at once, the trip must be delayed until after my furlough--a delay of two years. That made us decide to go.

That the village was on the sea, to be reached by a boat trip of about fourteen hours, and that there was a daily market for fresh meat and vegetables minimized the difficulties of heat, of travel and of unusual risks of disease for itinerating at that season. Thus we silenced all the objectors, and well prepared with mosquito net, "Flit" for those of "China's millions" that came our way, with beds, books, and food we boarded a small steamer about six o'clock in the evening. The sun, a great red ball, sank into the sea making this marvelous harbor with its surrounding mountains even more beautiful. Miss Fan, the evangelist who went with me, had her first sea trip, but proved a good sailor. Some time after we had cleared the harbor, the cook came with an invitation from ship's owner for us to speak to passengers crowded on the open space in front of the boat. Again that cool starry evening the story of Love was told. Such a joy it is to witness for Him.

The next morning after a transfer to small sailboats we reached Wang Chia Tan without trouble and were soon surrounded by curious crowds who were seeing for the first time an educated Chinese woman and one with unbound feet as well as all the queernesses of the foreign woman. I wore Chinese clothes so my brown hair, blue eyes, glasses, and white skin, though by then quite tanned, were all subjects for comment. We soon were comfortably settled in an empty three-room house with a large shady court-yard joining the cook's home.

I can't write in detail of the busy, happy week. The first evening a curious, expectant crowd squatted on the clean-swept threshing floor to hear for the first time of God's Love manifest in Jesus Christ, and day after day we had only to go out to speak to be quickly surrounded. Wherever we went we were followed by numbers of children and grown-ups who had not yet had a chance to "see"! We were invited daily to homes of the wealthy and influential families to call and to tell the story to those whose custom and position kept them within their own courtyards. One old man said, "I'm seventy years old and I never before have heard of Jesus, but now that I have heard I believe". The Holy Spirit truly was working mightily in this heathen village.

How I wished you could have shared the joy of one afternoon when we were escorted to the home of an old scholar of high rank and of fine family. One son, a painter of repute, has also, by China's old examination system, received the same degree and title. Another son, while not so high in title, is nevertheless well-educated. We were treated with the greatest respect and courtesy. Tea was served and soon the aged scholar and son entered, saying that they wished to hear all about Jesus. To begin from the first and unfold to them the wonderful story, to see them listen so earnestly, was to share a bit of His glory! After an hour, lest we should be weary, we again had tea, also cakes and melons. Again they listened. A few nights later the two sons came to call bringing pictures which the artist, in spite of the intense heat, had painted especially for us. Both asked for Pocket Testaments and put their declarations to follow Christ in writing. One son has plans to open a school, using buildings in their own courtyard, and teach it without pay. Thirty had already registered but they had plans for seventy or more. That there are no immediate relatives to attend it shows his true spirit of service for others. He hopes to also teach his pupils of his new-found Master.

The conversion of these scholars is important. Not that one with education is esteemed above another uneducated, but because they are the leaders and others were waiting their decision. Mr. Wang told us that already some twenty men had spoken to him concerning forming a group to study. A number of women and girls, the last days after they understood what we were doing, overcame their timidity and came to the courtyard to learn of Jesus and to memorize some songs. Even a group of rowdy boys learned to sing a few simple songs and choruses. We later heard them being freely sung in the village. This surely is a good substitute for the vile language of the streets. When we left we had the satisfaction that many of the village, at least know the name of Jesus and why He came to earth.

On the day we had planned to leave a south-east wind made the narrow neck of the entrance to the harbor impassible, so we went back to shore. The second day our sail-boat made the steamer, but the purser with the ship's credentials did not get out. This wind blew continuously and the ship could not unload its cargo nor could it go on to Tsingtao. After waiting another day with the sea becoming more and more rough, we made a more sheltered port where we rocked violently on the mad sea for five days. Even after two terrific thunder storms accompanied by heavy rain, that wind still persisted. At the second port all of the passengers, except Miss Fan and me, got off to stay in an inn. We were occupying a small room with two doors, giving us good circulation and were at least cool. Miss Fan if lying down was not seasick, and I was not even dizzy. We felt a hot inn where we had less chance than on the ship to watch our food was less desirable than our lurching vessel, so we stayed on it. For several days I cooked on the ship's stove. The numbers of melons we had bought to take home were life-savers. I often thought of the ship quiet as the"painted ship upon the painted ocean" and that we were just the opposite. However compared with that famous vessel ours was the more enviable. At least we had the excitement of trying to keep the luggage as well as ourselves in one place with the added indoor sport of trying to hold a kettle on the stove and stand up at the same time. In the wildest tossing we feasted on bread and onions; the wind won and the kettle wouldn't stay on. I remember still the taste one hungry afternoon of fresh roasted peanuts sent in by the ship's owner!

After a week of the storm I saw the men on a nearby boat worshipping the gods of the sea and heaven. They Koutowed, burned paper and incense, beat cymbals, shot off fire crackers and then set a burning pile of dried sticks tied together like a boat brave with flags of blue and red paper, afloat in the sea. Fresh water was at a premium, but we managed to have a daily face-wash and enough to drink. The last few days our supplies were gone, but we found by using our own bowls and getting the hot food before flies could touch it that the rice and vegetable prepared by the ship's cook was good and satisfying. We learned later that one night as we lay at anchor bandits had passed close by our ship going to a nearby village where they took ten men and thirteen girls for ransom. Had they known that two girls, one a foreigner, were asleep on board with doors wide open, my story might be a continued one and the ten days stretched to ten months, but the Father's protection saved us from even the slightest alarm.

These days we were learning lessons--much needed lessons--in contentment, although one's precious vacation days were slipping by; in thankfulness, for life's sheer necessities; and in being reminded again that our lives are not our own and that our plans are subject to His will. We were very conscious of His presence and felt that nothing could take away the joy of the days just gone, and no matter what we might experience the glory of walking with Him would remain.

The storm spent itself in a last half day of unusual violence; then the calm followed by a moderate south westerly wind told us that our prison days were ended. On Thursday the tenth day we reached home--to find it was Friday! Mr. & Mrs. Coonradt, worried by our delayed return, had sent a man that very day with a basket of provisions to find us. Such is the loving thoughtfulness of my co-laborers!

The fall travels will soon begin and still we shall be going to new places. These two years have been full and still I haven't been over the field once. Please pray that the blessing "above all that we ask or thing" may be upon our work; that war-torn China may through her continued calamities sense her greatest need--Christ Who alone can bring her peace.

In His Name,

Sincerely,

Irene Tompkins

CABLE ADDRESS: "INCULCATE NEW YORK"

TELEPHONE WATKINS 9-8191

THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U. S. A.
156 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK

(Irene Forsythe)
Tsingtau, China,
Received, may 1931.

Dear friends:-

Have you a spirit of wanderlust? Fortunately I have, for my life is one of incessant travelling about. Come, I'll take you over the road travelled from September 1930 to February 1931. I call myself "a gypsy for the Gospel."

Tsingtao West to Kiochaw."By ricksha, train and ricksha, 60 miles with Miss Huo and Miss Fan, stayed ten days", is one item of my diary.

Kiochaw N.W. to Kangchia Chuang."By ricksha, train, wheelbarrow and walking 33 miles. Stayed eighteen days." Lived here in the yard of an old temple whose idols have been recently carried out and dumped in one of the many large ponds surrounding the village. The big empty building has been used since as a meeting place for "Thousand Character classes" for the illiterate and for a sort of farmer's organization, and the local Christians got permission for us to use it. In the day time, as it was the busy time of fall harvest, I plodded on in the never-ending but always-interesting Chinese language study and did what I could for the endless stream of babies with diarrhoea. After a supper at dark and the cessation of labor in the fields, crowds of non-Christians, at first mostly men but gradually more women came to the temple. This is practically new territory, so the victrola, a foreign woman, two educated Chinese girls with natural unbound feet who preached so interestingly, and the singing of simple songs drew great numbers. Some were idly curious, others were truly interested. I had the joy of studying the Bible with the few Christians and I marvelled to see how those new believers who had had so little regular instruction had been led by the Spirit Himself, to a deep perception of spiritual truth.

West to Fang Ling. "By wheelbarrow pushed by one man and pulled by a man and a mule, four miles. Stayed twelve days." Lived in an empty schoolhouse in a temple courtyard. This village was formerly so anti-foreign that, when in the early days, the magistrate went to announce that the emperor of China had given permission to Germany to build the present railroad to Tsinan, the villagers called him a "foreign devil" and beat him and his horse wounding them severely. When the construction began they fought the workmen, killed some and it was only after they were defeated by German soldiers that the work could go on. The railroad was built however further to the south. This shows a bit of the former spirit of the place, and you will see how it has changed. Every night from three to five hundred stood at the open

space in front of the temple and listened attentively to the gospel story. We sensed no anti-foreign feeling at all. The medicine box proved most useful and helpful here. At the feet of the hideous figures of the newly repaired and painted idols I had my classes with the teacher. The headman of the village who formerly was bitterly antagonistic to the gospel was most cordial and friendly. He came with gifts of food for us one morning, much to our surprise. While he made no public profession, he learned to pray and seemed truly touched. A teacher in a nearby village led his pupils every night to hear and they learned several songs which they sang unusually well.

Fang Ling to Tsingtoo. "From 6 A.M. I rode a mule in the rain four miles to the train, caught a slow freight and passenger train to Tsingtoo at 7 P.M. to meet the Board representative, Rev. Dr. George T. Scott, and party who were visiting in Tsingtoo. I arrived barely in time to go to dinner with them at the Grand Hotel, the finest in Tsingtoo, in my Chinese country clothes! But there was no other way, at least they saw me as I am most of the time.

To Chang Chia Wutzu. "90 miles by train, 12 miles across country in ricksha and riding a mule, stayed three weeks." Glorious fall weather made the preaching trips especially enjoyable. Walked to nine villages, several large market centers. The victrola is a splendid help. Someone is always glad to bring out a table and benches and often a pot of tea. After playing a little while we have a good crowd for a preaching service. We gave out a great quantity of tracts and gospels here. Besides these trips we had classes for women, and at night I helped Miss Huo with the non-Christian service while Miss Fan led the few Christians in Bible study. Here an elder, who for various reasons had become so discouraged he was about to give up his faith, renewed his consecration with a new understanding and love for the Master. It was simply beautiful to see the change in him. The Master, too, graciously touched the body of his wife who was paralyzed. She walked to the gate with us the day we left, much to the joy of us and to the surprise of the non-Christians who had scorned and mocked saying that she had brought on the calamity by believing in Christianity. What sweet fellowship we had with them!

Are you weary travelling? I've taken you over only a few of the many roads lined with villages. Wherever you go, in whatever direction you look, on - on - on. There are villages we've touched by a few, and those only slightly, of the thousands, yes millions, of China's villages still waiting--without Christ, for messengers to travel the roads. The joy of the road is waiting for you.

Faithfully yours,
Irene Forsythe.

12/7

The song of the angels still hovers near
A world in depression, suffering, and fear.
Oh, Child of the Manger with Love cleanse and empower
Live forth in the hearts ;light this world's dark hour.

copied 12/31/31

Irene Forsythe
(of Tsingtao station, China)
138 Francisco, Rutherford, N.J.
December 1931

Dear Friends:—

Many of you dear friends and prayer-helpers I have seen since my return to America and how much the visits have meant to me! Others I still hope to see before I return next summer. Some of you are wondering where I am and why no word has come. I want to send a Christmas greeting from the "Biblical Seminary" in New York where I am spending eight months in ~~preparation~~ study, according to the Board's rule, in preparation for return to China. My Mother is with me for the year and we have a delightful home ~~with~~ with a couple, also from China, in Rutherford, New Jersey. It is quite an experience to join the army of commuters who rush daily into the city. It is being a time of rich blessing. Please pray that it will be a time of real preparation for the next term in China.

Please continue to remember the four Chinese women evangelists who are carrying on the village work this year. How I wish that each of you could have shared the joy of one trip last April. In this class in Kaomi was the most manifest working of the Holy Spirit in my experience in China. We rode on wheelbarrows in a dust storm through wheat fields, dried, stunted, some partly buried in sand, and in crying need for rain. This was just a picture of the spiritual condition of the church to which we were going. It rained- the wheat grew. The Holy Spirit truly did a marvelous work and the church was revived and refreshed.

One of the teachers in the primary school under the direction of the church, a scholar of the old days of China, impressed us from the first. Years ago he went to Peking to take examinations for a degree, hoping for official appointment. His two brothers already had theirs. It was falsely reported that he was a little-shop keeper so his essay was laid aside unexamined. As a result he lost interest, went from bad to worse, and spent most of his inheritance. He was possessed by a demon, he said, for forty years and was utterly miserable both physically and spiritually. When he went to teach in the little school he had his very first touch with Christianity. During the class he was truly born again and what a clear outstanding transformation it was! He was freed from his bondage and became a new creation in Christ Jesus. He was spiritually starved and he fairly drank in every new truth. His spiritual progress in that one week many believers, even in America, do not equal in a lifetime. We felt a new humility and awe in the presence of such a miracle. The expression of his face changed from one of torment and misery to one of most wonderful peace. His joy and gratefulness that Christ would FORGIVE HIM knew no bounds. The cross itself won him and what to us has become a commonplace was to him a marvel of marvels. His clear powerful testimony before a group meeting of most of the village and all of his scholars, who had knew his condition, led even non-Christians to marvel and to praise God.

The young teacher, too, became a Christian. A number of the church members came to a new realization of Christ and a new life came to them. The deacon's old mother through the trials of the year, came to a personal

relation to Christ. The deacon, who for a year had ~~for a year~~ been living in sin and was a disgrace to Christ and the church came back to the Master in confession and repentence. He said that his home that week had the difference of Heaven and hell in it. He was the first, in one of the last meetings, to promise God to lead his family in daily worship. Family after family followed him with old vows renewed and new ones made. Truly the joy of that day was that of Heaven come down. Let us praise Him who alone can melt hearts and let us pray for a greater outpouring of His Spirit.

In another village for some years there have been just a few cold-hearted Christians. Last year, spontaneously, a revival came.-not by any known means ~~and~~ through any known person. One man, tho very poor, gave part of his courtyard for a church; the group at great sacrifice raised money; they solicited some more, bought materials, dressed the logs themselves, and donated labor to build a church. They were persecuted and scorned by some of the villagers. "If you can build a church we will believe," some scoffed. A letter this week from Miss Fan, one of the evangelists, who went there to have services, tells of a most unusual group of enthusiastic believers and inquirers. The new church in completed. The benches are too few but the church and the courtyard outside were packed every night in the busy harvest season. "It must be the result", said Miss Fan, "of the prayers of friends in America". Your prayers are being answered. Keep on!

Good news comes from the station in Tsingtao. The girl's school with 280 students has daily chapel in the school and and Bible classes in which an eager spirit is plainly manifest, are being held in the home of one of the missionaries. The 98 registered in the boy's school, packed in a building originally built for 45, has a fine spirit too. Report of the spiritual growth of one of the leaders is cause for rejoicing. One other leader, Mr. Li, is much on my heart. Please join in prayer for him.

China, now, if ever, needs your understanding, help, and prayers. With internal division come the perils of communism. The greatest flood in her history have left an aftermath of famine and disease. Reports indicate Chinese progress in responsible leadership and in increased Chinese contribution for organizing and providing relief. This, too, will need our help. "We are greatly impressed by the interchange of friendly greetings between the Christians of China and Japan". There is significance also in the report in the 'New York Times', that the leader of the Nanking government, Chiang Kai Shek, called in conference a group of Christian leaders pointing out the crisis in Chinese affairs and the peril of communism. He appealed for the prayers of Christian people and at the close of the conference joined with them in prayer for China. Let us unite our prayers that hatred and greed will be dispelled and that the present international trouble will be settled according to Christian principles, and that, somehow, both China and Japan will be turned to Christ.

From all over China comes the report of openness and even eagerness to hear the gospel. There is a longing for a deeper spiritual life among Christians. Among non-Christians there is an unparalleled interest and willingness to hear of Jesus Christ. Millions, however, have not once heard. Missionary work is not over in China, it has just begun! Let us not forget our own love-responsibility. Even in these hard times let there be "NO RETREAT" May we remember the work that depends on our gifts of money and prayers. May we with a new understanding of the real values in life, with a new spirit of self-sacrifice and love "keep the faith"-that there be "NO RETREAT".

May the very difficulties challenge our faith that we may see a new manifestation of HIS GLORY. May we in a new way consecrate ourselves to the unfinished task.

"I gave Thee but Thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be;
All that I have is Thine alone
A trust, O Lord, from Thee."

Sincerely, Irene Irwin

(If necessary to cut out some paragraph + necessary.)

CABLE ADDRESS: "INCULCATE NEW YORK"

TELEPHONE WATKINS 9-8191

THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U. S. A.
156 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK

The song of the angels still hovers o'er
A world held in sin, in depression sore
A child of the manger, cleanse our hearts
fill with power
By thy Cross be Victor in this world's dark hour.

(Irene Forsythe)
(Of Tsingtao station, China)
138 Francisco,
Rutherford, New Jersey,
December 1931.

Dear friends:-

Many of you dear friends and prayer-helpers I have seen since my return to America and how much the visits have meant to me! Others I still hope to see before I return next summer. Some of you are wondering where I am and why no word has come. I want to send a Christmas greeting from the"Biblical Seminary" in New York where I am spending eight months in study, according to the Board's rule, in preparation for return to China. My mother is with me for the year and we have delightful home with a couple, also from China, in Rutherford, New Jersey. It is quite an experience to join the army of commuters who rush daily into the city. It is being a time of rich blessing. Please pray that it will be a time of real preparation for the next term in China.

Please continue to remember the four Chinese women evangelists who are carrying on the village work this year. How I wish that each of you could have shared the joy of one trip last April. In this class in Kaomi was the most manifest working of the Holy Spirit in my experience in China. We rode on wheelbarrows in a dust storm through wheat fields, dried, stunted, some partly buried in sand, and in crying need for rain. This was just a picture of the spiritual condition of the church to which we were going. It rained--the wheat grew. The Holy Spirit truly did a marvelous work and the church was revived and refreshed.

One of the teachers in the primary school under the direction of the church, a scholar of the old days of China, impressed us from the first. Years ago he went to Peking to take examinations for a degree, hoping for official appointment. His two brothers already had theirs. It was falsely reported that he was a little shop-keeper so his essay was laid aside unexamined. As a result he lost interest, went from bad to worse, and spent most of his inheritance. He was possessed by a demon, he said, for forty years and was utterly miserable both physically and spiritually. When he went to teach in the little school he had his very first touch with Christianity.

During the class he was truly born again and what a clear outstanding transformation it was! He was freed from his bondage and became a new creation in Christ Jesus. He was spiritually starved and he fairly drank in every new truth. His spiritual progress in that one week many believers, even in America, do not equal in a lifetime. We felt a new humility and awe in the presence of such a miracle. The expression of his face changed from one of torment and misery to one of most wonderful peace. His joy and gratefulness that Christ would FORGIVE HIM knew no bounds. The cross itself won him and what to us has become a commonplace was to him a marvel of marvels. His clear powerful testimony before a group meeting of most of the village and all of his scholars, who all knew his condition, led even non-Christians to marvel and to praise God.

The young teacher, too, became a Christian. A number of the church members came to a new realization of Christ and a new life came to them. The deacon's old mother through the trials of the year, came to a personal relation to Christ. The deacon, who for a year had been living in sin came back to the Master in confession and repentence. He said that his home that week had the difference of heaven and hell in it. He was the first, in one of the last meetings, to promise God to lead his family in daily worship. Family after family followed him with old vows renewed and new ones made. Truly tha joy of that day was that of heaven come down. Let us praise Him who alone can melt hearts and let us pray for a greater outpouring of His Spirit.

In another village for some years there have been just a few cold-hearted Christians. Last year, spontaneously, a revival came,-not by any known means or through any known person. One man, though very poor, gave part of his courtyard for a church; the group at great sacrifice raised money; they solicited some more, bought materials, dressed the logs themselves, and donated labor to build a church. They were persecuted and scorned by some of the villagers. "If you can build a church we will believe", some scoffed. A letter this week from Miss Fan, one of the evangelists, who went there to have services, tells of a most unusual group of enthusiastic believers and inquirers. The new church is completed. The benches are too few but the church and the courtyard outside were packed every night in the busy harvest season. "It must be the result", said Miss Fan, "of the prayers of friends in America". Your prayers are being answered. Keep on!

China,now, if ever, needs your understanding, help and prayers. The greatest flood in her history has left an aftermath of famine and disease. Reports indicate Chinese progress in responsible leadership and in increased Chinese contribution for organizing and providing relief. This too will need our help. "We are greatly impressed by the interchange of friendly greetings between the Christians of China and Japan". There is significance also in the report in the 'New York Times' that the leader of the Nanking government, Chiang Kai Skek, called in conference a group of Christian leaders pointing out the crisis in Chinese affairs and the peril of communism. He appealed for the prayers of Christian people and at the close of the conference joined with them in prayer for China.

From all over China comes the report of openness and even eagerness to hear the gospel. There is a longing for a deeper spiritual life among Christians. Among non-Christians there is an unparalleled interest and willingness to hear of Jesus Christ. Millions, however, have not once heard. Missionary work is not over in China, it has just begun! Let us not forget our own love-responsibility. Even in these hard times let there be "NO RETREAT". May we remember the work that depends on our gifts of money and prayers. May we with a new understanding of the real values in life, with a new spirit of self-sacrifice and love "keep the faith"-that there be "NO RETREAT". May the very difficulties challenge our faith that we may see a new manifestation of HIS GLORY. May we in a new way consecrate ourselves to the unfinished task.

"I gave Thee but Thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be;
All that I have is Thine alone
A trust, O Lord, from Thee."

Sincerely yours,
Irene Forsythe.

CABLE ADDRESS: "INCULCATE NEW YORK"

TELEPHONE WATKINS 9-8191

THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U. S. A.
156 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK

(Irene Forsythe)
(Of Tsingtao station, China)
138 Francisco,
Rutherford, New Jersey,
December 1931.

Dear friends:-

Many of you dear friends and prayer-helpers I have seen since my return to America and how much the visits have meant to me! Others I still hope to see before I return next summer. Some of you are wondering where I am and why no word has come. I want to send a Christmas greeting from the"Biblical Seminary" in New York where I am spending eight months in study, according to the Board's rule, in preparation for return to China. My mother is with me for the year and we have a delightful home with a couple, also from China, in Rutherford, New Jersey. It is quite an experience to join the army of commuters who rush daily into the city. It is being a time of rich blessing. Please pray that it will be a time of real preparation for the next term in China.

Please continue to remember the four Chinese women evangelists who are carrying on the village work this year. How I wish that each of you could have shared the joy of one trip last April. In this class in Kaomi was the most manifest working of the Holy Spirit in my experience in China. We rode on wheelbarrows in a dust storm through wheat fields, dried, stunted, some partly buried in sand, and in crying need for rain. This was just a picture of the spiritual condition of the church to which we were going. It rained--the wheat grew. The Holy Spirit truly did a marvelous work and the church was revived and refreshed.

One of the teachers in the primary school under the direction of the church, a scholar of the old days of China, impressed us from the first. Years ago he went to Peking to take examinations for a degree, hoping for official appointment. His two brothers already had theirs. It was falsely reported that he was a little shop-keeper so his essay was laid aside unexamined. As a result he lost interest, went from bad to worse, and spent most of his inheritance. He was possessed by a demon, he said, for forty years and was utterly miserable both physically and spiritually. When he went to teach in the little school he had his very first touch with Christianity.

During the class he was truly born again and what a clear outstanding transformation it was! He was freed from his bondage and became a new creation in Christ Jesus. He was spiritually starved and he fairly drank in every new truth. His spiritual progress in that one week many believers, even in America, do not equal in a lifetime. We felt a new humility and awe in the presence of such a miracle. The expression of his face changed from one of torment and misery to one of most wonderful peace. His joy and gratefulness that Christ would FORGIVE HIM knew no bounds. The cross itself won him and what to us has become a commonplace was to him a marvel of marvels. His clear powerful testimony before a group meeting of most of the village and all of his scholars, who all knew his condition, led even non-Christians to marvel and to praise God.

The young teacher, too, became a Christian. A number of the church members came to a new realization of Christ and a new life came to them. The deacon's old mother through the trials of the year, came to a personal relation to Christ. The deacon, who for a year had been living in sin came back to the Master in confession and repentence. He said that his home that week had the difference of heaven and hell in it. He was the first, in one of the last meetings, to promise God to lead his family in daily worship. Family after family followed him with old vows renewed and new ones made. Truly the joy of that day was that of heaven come down. Let us praise Him who alone can melt hearts and let us pray for a greater outpouring of His Spirit.

In another village for some years there have been just a few cold-hearted Christians. Last year, spontaneously, a revival came,-not by any known means or through any known person. One man, though very poor, gave part of his courtyard for a church; the group at great sacrifice raised money; they solicited some more, bought materials, dressed the logs themselves, and donated labor to build a church. They were persecuted and scorned by some of the villagers. "If you can build a church we will believe", some scoffed. A letter this week from Miss Fan, one of the evangelists, who went there to have services, tells of a most unusual group of enthusiastic believers and inquirers. The new church is completed. The benches are too few but the church and the courtyard outside were packed every night in the busy harvest season. "It must be the result", said Miss Fan, "of the prayers of friends in America". Your prayers are being answered. Keep on!

China,now, if ever, needs your understanding, help and prayers. The greatest flood in her history has left an aftermath of famine and disease. Reports indicate Chinese progress in responsible leadership and in increased Chinese contribution for organizing and providing relief. This too will need our help. "We are greatly impressed by the interchange of friendly greetings between the Christians of China and Japan". There is significance also in the report in the 'New York Times' that the leader of the Nanking government, Chiang Kai Skek, called in conference a group of Christian leaders pointing out the crisis in Chinese affairs and the peril of communism. He appealed for the prayers of Christian people and at the close of the conference joined with them in prayer for China.

From all over China comes the report of openness and even eagerness to hear the gospel. There is a longing for a deeper spiritual life among Christians. Among non-Christians there is an unparalleled interest and willingness to hear of Jesus Christ. Millions, however, have not once heard. Missionary work is not over in China, it has just begun! Let us not forget our own love-responsibility. Even in these hard times let there be "NO RETREAT". May we remember the work that depends on our gifts of money and prayers. May we with a new understanding of the real values in life, with a new spirit of self-sacrifice and love "keep the faith"-that there be "NO RETREAT". May the very difficulties challenge our faith that we may see a new manifestation of HIS GLORY. May we in a new way consecrate ourselves to the unfinished task.

"I gave Thee but Thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be;
All that I have is Thine alone
A trust, O Lord, from Thee."

Sincerely yours,
Irene Forsythe.

Back again to the village roads
TO the wheelbarrow squeaking under its loads
Back to the needs and the people I love
To share the great joy that comes from above.

August to December 1932.

It is good to be back, Furlough memories of friends old and new and the joy of meeting at least some of you who are making it possible for me to be in China are still very vivid, How I wish each of you could have shared the experiencessince my return in august.

The new rooms all finished on my return so getting settled in my new home was the first task. I have a living room, and a kitchen, with a Chinese style built in stove which with drum attached to the stove pipe heats the other rooms, a bath room , a bed room and an attic. It is a cozy convenient home and to have it to come to after months in the country is a blessing indeed. I was especially glad to have a place to entertain in installments the fifty delegates to Presbytery in so many of whose homes in the country I have been entertained with such generous hospitality.

After a weeks conference in Tsinan preparation for a country trip began. bed and all, medicin box, food basket, kitchen utensils., chinese-clothes, both single and padded, books, pictures, victrola, ---a supply for seven weeks to visit four villages had to be collected and packed. It seemed so natural to get into my chinese-clothes to start back to the villages that it almost seemed that I had not been away. The memory tho of you who last year had promised to pray for us gave us a confidence that was new.

To get breakfast, close up the home and catch an early train ment early rising. There was almost no one on the street to remark that " the foreigner has on chinese - clothes" as our rickshas piled high passed by to the station. While waiting for the train there was an opportunity to comfort a friend who was weeping biterly for the loss of her son. The third class coah still offered its opportunity in answering friendly questions as to who why , what of the foreigner and to witness for the Master and to give out tracts and gospels.

At Lan Tsun a christian was waiting with a wheelbarrow. Many of you will remember the modle of this important vehicle. Soon my legs duly protesting at being doubled under me , we began our squeaking ride of three and a hali hours to go ten miles to the villags.

Could you have seen the river crossing: Perfectly respectable American wading would have been unspeakable. The man squated by the bank and altho almost over come by the humor of the situation I had y to hop up on his back put both arms around his neck and be carried over. He was so much shorter than I that in order to keep my feet out of the water he very nearly tipped me off over his head. At last he pantingly deposited me on the bank and returned for the mule and the barrow. I was sorry none of you were ther to enjoy it with me. How a sense of humor helps.

Altho the peanut and sweettpotato harvest kept us from having regular day clsses, yet each day was full of opportunities to witness. Each night the little school house was filled with non christians and the crowning of the day to me was the evning Bible class. To open his word to the scattered spiritually hungry groups is indeed no small privilege.

The spirit of revival which for a year has been sweeping our province is very evident and such a decided work of the spirit of God I have not seen before. All was very quiet and unemotional but there was a deep spirit of conviction of sin and a desire for peace. Groups came quietly to our dooms to ask us to pray for them, and there weeping confessed their sins. One man was so convicted that for three days he could neither eat nor sleep. What a burden of sin he did pour out to God, and many came to a real vital experiance of Christ as Ssviour

At Kuan Chuang the one christian family had suffered many years of perescution. The last few years a few more had believed and at a tremendous sacrifice built a small church, still with out benches, but kaoling stocks servsd very well. A few months ago even the non Christians who came did not respond in the least . This fall aduits and children memorized a number of Bible verses.

At the last meeting we gave the used Sunday School pictures brought from America, to those who perfectly memorized the verses. To our surprise over twenty non christians received them. It is truly the work of our Lord and Saviour.. I am sure you are glad your prayers are being answered. The christians came to a new experience of Jesus as Saviour and we felt more and more as Moses - that we should remove our shoes for we were standing on holy ground indeed.

Lui Ke Chuang. Again for a week nonchristians and christian met for Bible memorization and Bible Study This particular group has very few baptized woman members, so the church is much weakensd by girls marring into non christian homes. We will return soon to help the inquirers there.

One night just after we had gone to bed our outer court - yard gate sounded as if some one was trying to open it by moving the bar with a key. The sound repeted more and more vigorously made us think some one was trying just to frighten us . The fact that the day before we arrived as we later learned two nests of bandits had been cleared out and two men freed that were being held for ransom, did'nt help us to be unafraid at this time. The noise was repeted again most vigourously and folowed by the sound of foot steps in the courtyard and a rattling of the kaoling in the yard. I was sure some ome had entered and was preparing to fire the building. The steps came nearer an our room door was shaken g gently. It is neadless to say that by then our hearts were pounding and we were shaking too. Then after a silence and in the second shaking of our a door, Miss Fan decided we must get up and see how many had really entered , and dressed. She planned that since it would be I that would be likly be taken she would go with me and Miss Huo to give the news. Finally she got up in spite of our protests (we were afraid of of stray s shots) and went to the window. There in the moon light was some thing black and white in front of the gate. Strange they should be wearing white she thotand just then she saw it rise, and strech out its paws a <u>big black ~~an~~ and white dog</u>. It had been fastened in by mistake and was trying to get out in every way it could. by moving the lower bar of the gate with its mouth and failing in that had come to our door to get us to let it out However through it all there was not a sound like a dog. It was unbelieveable that a dog could so sound like a person. we saw the funney side n next day and had a good laugh.

The encloed picture is of Miss Fan speaking through a copper tube to a deaf old lady. Since the trumpet can be easily and cheaply copied here a number have found great joy in it . One old man very deaf for many years by means of it enjoyed his first church service in that time

The Yeh Tou group have the record for Bible memorization . One little boy had his father call him at night to learn his verses. his record was forty verses and an old lady surprised all with fifteen verse. in the few days, Formily we would have thought for a non christian to memorize the Bible would be impossible and only this year have we tried this method and found it most strikingly successful and fruitful.

I went to my chinese home for a few days and such a greeting they gave me Mrs. Fan is well for her years. The whole family had a welcome meeting in the church with speaches and refreshments . There is such a spirit of fellowship and I was glad to see them.

Twenty girls and women from near by villages joind the local group at Tai chih Chuang for a three weeks Bible Cinference one of the best we have ever had. The local church group provided the fuel , the salty vegetaboe and cereal and the rest each one provided for h er self. Here a regular schedule filled the day and early morning prayer meetings at four or four-thirty morning and afternoon, and evening classes in phonetic writing, preperation for baptism, singing , and personal evangelism and Bible, with volly ball and gymnasium for recreation. Again from emphasis on the Bible teaching came great conviction of sin and confession. A number found Christ as saviour for the first time, while others came to a new realization of him. Spiritual groth of the local church group was especially evident. The whole class was permeated by the very spirit of God. It was so wholly apart from the mere influence of persons- as we our selves were very fully aware. The last meeting of testimony, new blessing , new understanding and new pledges of loyalty was one to be long remembered.

The wheelbarrow trip the next day was the most hectic and funny of all my trips these years. The four barrows were in continuous trouble, a mule backed off a bridge into the river and the loaded barrow just saved. Miss Huo and I found our selves tipped over on the ground unhurt, however, Miss Fan's barrow was just saved at the edge of a high ledge. A blind man with us was tipped off twice. harness broke and one barrow man had a bad fall cutting his hand. We reached home to find the indispensable victrola missing. We had to learn ~~learn~~ again not to count ourselves nor our possessions dear to ourselves. The next morning the victrola was found must strangely in the bed roll of the blind man.

A few experiences of the road.

The last of Nov. we again started for the cook's village down the coast where before Miss Fan an I were marooned for ten days on a boat. The superstitous ones said that was because we had preached aganst the God in the temple out side the city. The time the ships owner said after we'd had a fearful wind, (" Evey time you come there is a storm" It took two days to go and on the return we tossed in a wild storm from Sunday evening untill Tuesday morning. Truly the entrance of the Gospel to that big conservative, sin hardened village has been through suffering. The little group of boys and girls who believed have suffered bitter scorn and persecution from their families who were suspicious of us and afraid of the real out come as well as from neighbours. But they have been true, the opening of that village has been very slow and delicate and just now were we able to have a public gathering with the girls present and even then the girls were in a separat end room. Of all scorn , cursing, disrespect and persecution Miss Huo bore as she held ~~it~~ the first days classes. She is small and slight but the way she managed that mob so that meetings were at last held in respectful silence and she and brought the group of wild youngsters under discipline was itself a work of the Master.

"The little child shall lead them " That group of young peo-

ple must be the wedge to the hardened grown-up hearts for still there is no adult who has strongly come out . Several mothers came to testiy of the change in their sons. That they were not gambling, cursing, lying and disobedient as before. One said that since last year she had not heard her son curse once and he had refused to get idol-worship paper for her. Had you heard one boy who for two years had persecuted his aunt for her belief and in that time had not once called her by name, who had been given up as beyound control by his parents, for steeling, and gambling pray with tears for forgiveness of sin. and had seen him before the taunting crowd knesl down with the group to pray aloud you to would have been glad.

While Miss Huo taught this group Miss Fan and I walked to the nearby villages all of which had never before had a witness for Christ in them. In the six days we walked 137 li (forty seven miles) went to twenty villages and at a very conservative estimate 5000 people heard for ~~for~~ the first time the name of Jesus. The day's experiences varied from greatestcourtesy and welcome to drink tea in the formal guest hall with its rock-gardened courtyard to one place where Probably though fear that we were communists leaders(from whom they'd recently had trouble) we were so feared that altho the men listened the women stood at a distance and and we felt no impression at all was made on them. At the very next village surprised us by saying "last year at Wang Chia Tan Jesus healed my disease and I pray every time we eat."Others testified to the truth of this. Any way all of the eight families came out and just could not hear enough in their eagerness . One woman followed us to ask questions as we were leaving. We came to a large market where there was a big funeral . Here we were almost mobbed by the crowd of at least 500 men and a few women who wanted to see the queer foreigner and hear. We actually fled out of the village with the mod following to an open space where we could talk to them- sheep with out a shepherd.

Wherver we go we find in general a new spirit, even last year not so evident as this year- a marked hunger, openess and longing for something real and dependable. Seemingly unaccountably new groups are springing up in new villages and asking to be taught. One group with no leader them selves built a church in the temple courtyard . We will there later.

The harvest white-the labourers are few. Still the laymens Fact Finding Committe feels no need of continual evengelism in future mission work .The fact finding of these three months in the country gives me a different conclusion.

Thank you for your prayers. they are being answered. Please give yourselves to more definite believing earnest prayer for the Holy Spirits leading in this critical time, We are depending on you.

Irene Forsythe
Tsi Yang Road
Tsingtao Shantung
China.